

time, and thereby perhaps disable him from doing justice to his clients as a counsellor, in which character it was always his ambition to give the utmost satisfaction to all his clients.

At this period I could read almost any English book, on common subjects, with the greatest accuracy and propriety. I could write three different hands, cast up any common account in arithmetic, had a tolerable idea of geography, was making a hasty progress in the study of history, and was tolerably expert at taking off any drawing at sight, which was not very difficult. Let not the reader imagine, that, when I say this, I mean to extol my own genius, or to expose my vanity. Though the genius of a youth is undoubtedly the principal mover in the pursuit of science, yet it is by no means the only one. I had the happiness to fall into hands that were well acquainted with the true mode of education; and had I not under such a director acquired every thing I have just mentioned, I must have been a dunce indeed. England swarms with schools and teachers to such a degree, that one would imagine

imagine every native was a profound scholar; but, alas! it is found by experience, that nine out of ten of these teachers have as much need of being taught as their pupils. Hence it is, that many bright geniuses are for ever lost to the world.

Permit me now to make a digression.—There are few authors, I am told, who write their own histories; and those who do, describe all their good qualities, but say little of their defects. I am now going to give my readers an instance that I am not partial even to myself. When I confess my error, I have a right to plead my defence, to beg mercy from my kind readers, and to hope that they will attribute my errors to the little experience I may reasonably be supposed to have had: I have, in one instance, bought wisdom by experience.

My father, after several times coming upon me unexpectedly, observed, that even my amusements tended to improvement; and therefore at last left me to amuse myself in what manner I best liked, without even giving himself the trouble of asking me what I was about. I was naughty

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